

THE LONG HAUL

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Upcoming Events

May 1
Labor Day (Germany)

May 14
Mother's Day (U.S.)

May 25
Ascension Day (Germany)

May 29
Memorial Day (U.S.)

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Suggestions? Comments?
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New CSM Reports to AFSB-E

Jennifer L. King, AFSB-E Public Affairs Officer



AFSB-E will now reap the benefits of nearly 35 years of Army service as Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Paul Baxter, Jr. takes the reins as the senior non-commissioned officer.

"It was an honor to be selected to serve as the Brigade CSM," Baxter explained. "I volunteered to do a tour in Iraq and found out just before I left the States I was coming to AFSB-E. I look forward to working and sharing knowledge with the team here at AFSB-E."

Having most recently served at AFSB-Iraq, he is already familiar with the AFSB mission and how we support the Soldier.

"While at AFSB-Iraq, I was educated on the way business is conducted by AFSB, the people, and how the Brigade is run in theater," he said. "It opened my eyes. I gained a lot of useful knowledge on what some of the areas are, operations, equipment, funds and personnel shortage."

Baxter has received the Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with four oak leaf clusters, and the Meritorious Service Medal. He is also a member of the Order of the Spur.

The Order of the Spur "...is an organization for Cavalry Scouts," Baxter said. Requirements must be met before a Soldier can be nominated and then voted on by a board of officers and peers. Once selected, the soldier is given a pair of cavalry spurs during the induction ceremony. From that moment, the soldier can wear the spurs to formal military gatherings.

Congress Begins Tackling FY07 Defense Bill

The U.S. House of Representatives has begun review of the Fiscal Year 2007 (FY07) Defense Authorization bill. During the Congressional review of the proposed budget, the DoD's request for more financial support to the military's Tricare health network is expected to come under close scrutiny.

proposed higher pharmacy copays, deductibles and enrollment fees, and the changes could affect all military retirees who are under age 65.

The House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Military Personnel is also expected to review various recruitment issues, including bonuses and raises for some positions.

In the FY07 bill, the Pentagon has

OPINION



Col. Xavier P. Lobeto
AFSB-E Commander

"We have and will continue to achieve the proper brigade stance in the War on Terror."

Change is inevitably difficult. Leaving a comfort zone and trying new things is upsetting and nerve-wracking. Yet change remains the proponent of growth and maturity, and it is through that manifestation that both people and organizations improve themselves. Sometimes, these decisions are painful and difficult, but that does not make them bad decisions.

I trust our leadership to make the best decisions for the Army and the Department of Defense (DoD), and they have chosen as their vehicles the European Command's Strategic Theater Transformation and the DoD's Global Posture Review. I believe that the implementation of these changes will make the Army leaner and faster – more apt to rapidly address an ever changing world environment.

As the Army evaluates its position throughout Europe, we remain committed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to a forward-stationed presence in Europe. However, we must ensure that our actions throughout the theater allow us to focus more resources on our mission, both through streamline

ing existing organizations and building others.

In the context of transformation, the DoD is not only refining previous operations but examining a strategic repositioning of troops. To the Army, this means changing the way units are structured, equipped and deployed, and in some instances, where they might be located. The Army is shifting its presence in the European continent to move from a Cold War stationary Army to an Army that is well-positioned, geographically and operationally, to address ever-changing threats.

This is an exciting time to be part of the Army. The decisions and changes that are happening *right now* are the ones that are building tomorrow's Army. As we continue to transform, we must remain flexible and responsive, and in the midst of change, not forget our daily mission to serve the Soldier.

The people who serve make an indelible impression on the Army. We have and will continue to achieve the proper brigade stance in the War on Terror.

Culture Shock: Loving Europe and Missing Home

Jennifer L. King
AFSB-E Public Affairs Officer

Things I love about Germany:

1. pheasants
2. pommes frites
3. Coke® in bottles
4. castles
5. the easy commute
6. um, the beer
7. the windows
8. shopping
9. the festivals
10. cobblestone streets

Things I miss about home:

1. talking to my family on an almost daily basis
2. drive thru restaurants
3. *The Washington Post*
4. understanding everything everyone says
5. lots of ice in drinks
6. pizza delivery
7. Wal-Mart®
8. not having to do monetary conversion rates in my head
9. pay at the pump gas
10. central heat and air

That said, I am so excited to be the new public affairs officer for AFSB-E. I may have only been here for a couple of weeks, but I've determined that there are wonderful people here, both Germans and Americans, and I'm delighted that my daily routine brings me into contact with both. I can't wait to see the rest of Europe and intend to take full advantage of my assignment here.

While I'm only assigned here for one year, I hope to have a year filled with professional growth and wonderful experiences. To those of you whom I have met so far, thank you so much for making me feel so welcome. And to those of you whom I haven't, I look forward to working with you to execute the Army's mission in Europe. Together, we can spread the AFSB-E story to the world.

Auf Wiedersehen



COL Lobeto presents the Commander's Award for Excellence to Nikki St. Amant, public affairs specialist at the U.S. Army Sustainment Command at Rock Island Arsenal, Ill. St. Amant served as the acting public affairs office for AFSB-E from February until April 2006. During her tenure, she coordinated public affairs issues related to the announcement of the closure of the Luxemburg facility and reinstated the publication of the AFSB-E newsletter *The Long Haul*.



Sonja McLaughlin receives the Superior Civilian Service Award from COL Lobeto upon her retirement from federal service after 26 years. The Superior Civilian Service Award was presented to her for her service as a USAREUR LAO from Oct. 7, 2003, to March 31, 2006. She was cited for her exemplary support, superior knowledge, leadership and customer service. McLaughlin also received certifications of appreciation and retirement.

NEWS



High-Ranking Terrorist Leader Killed



BAGHDAD, Iraq (Army News Service, April 14, 2006) – Multi-National Forces-Iraq announced the killing of a wanted terrorist and known al-Qaida associate, Rafid Ibrahim Fattah aka Abu Umar al Kurdi. Abu Umar al Kurdi died in an early morning raid March 27 in the vicinity of Abu Ghraib, Baghdad.

Officials confirmed he had ties to Jaysh al-Islami, Ansar al Sunnah, Taliban members in Afghanistan. Pakistani-based extremist groups, and senior al-Qaida leaders to include Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri.

The terrorist worked as a Jaysh al-Islami cell leader in Baquba for the last six months, and was allegedly involved in the kidnapping of an Iraqi woman. Over the past 15 years, Abu Umar al Kurdi traveled extensively throughout Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq and had met with senior al-Qaida leaders in Afghanistan in 1999.

In the 1980s he formed ties with the Muslim Brotherhood while in Iran and Pakistan before joining the Jihad in Afghanistan in 1989. He was given the title of an al-Qaida ambassador and attended military training camps near Jalabad where Osama bin Laden often visited. In 1991 he returned to the Muslim Brotherhood in Peshawar and in 1992 moved to Iraq, joining the Islamic Movement of Kurdistan.

Throughout the 1990s until his death, Abu Umar al Kurdi held various positions including that of liaison between terrorist networks, as an operations officer responsible for coordinating the activities of various terrorist groups, and as a security chief for a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan.

A current detainee claimed that Abu Umar al Kurdi recruited him into the JAI terrorist organization. The detainee also told officials that Abu Umar al-Kurdi kidnapped and murdered a female hostage several months ago. Officials confirmed the kidnapping and are investigating the murder.

(Editor's note: This story compiled from Department of Defense sources)

News



USAREUR Officials Recommend International Driving Permits

HEIDELBERG (Army News Service, April 19, 2006) – U.S. Army, Europe, officials recommended this week that U.S. forces personnel who drive outside their host country acquire an international driving permit.

Increased security during this summer's World Cup soccer championships in Germany makes the international driving permit a must-have in traveler's wallets, said Tom Lorenzini, USAREUR vehicle registrar.

"The expected additional border checks will raise your chances of getting fined if you are without it," he said, adding that permits are required in Austria, Greece, Spain, Turkey and all Middle Eastern countries.

Lorenzini recommended the permit even for travelers who only take occasional trips outside Germany, Italy or the Benelux nations.

Countries may change their rules at short notice, Lorenzini said, so "having the international permit is really the safe way to go."

USAREUR driver testing stations have all the information on documentation for the permit. The requirements are slightly different from country to country, but include:

- An application form, available at the issuing agency or your local driver-testing station. The form for American communities in Germany's Rhineland-Pfalz is online at [application](#).
- A valid U.S. forces driver's license (AE Form 190-1F).
- Two passport-sized, civilian-dress photos.
- A fee, normally between 13 and 30 euros.
- A U.S. passport (required for civilians and family members).

In Italy, Soldiers and civilians can get an international permit only from the American Automobile Association.

International driving permits are valid for one to three years, depending on the country of issue, or until the U.S. forces license expires, whichever comes first, Lorenzini said.

They are not valid for driving in the country where they were issued, and are only valid with a U.S. forces driver's license, he said.

For more information, the U.S. Department of State has many useful tips on driving abroad.

(Editor's note: Information provided by the U.S. Army, Europe, Office of the Provost Marshal.)

NEWS

Changes in Veterans Preferences

The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2006, signed into law on January 6, 2006, has expanded the definition of veterans' preference eligibility for employment and reduction-in-force purposes. The definition now includes those individuals who served on active duty for more than 180 consecutive days, other than for training, any part of which occurred during the period beginning September 11, 2001, and ending on the date prescribed by Presidential proclamation or by law as the last date of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

If you are a civilian employee and you believe you meet this new veterans' preference eligibility and are not currently coded as entitled to veterans' preference as indicated on your last Notification of Personnel Action, please provide a copy of your DD-214 to your servicing human resources specialist. Upon receipt of this documentation, your records will be reviewed and your personnel re-

If you believe you meet the requirements for this new veterans' preference eligibility and wish to claim veterans' preference for employment purposes, you must ensure your resume and supplemental data reflect your claim of veterans' preference and list your active duty military service dates

Generally, when applying for jobs under the merit promotion program, such as promotion, reassignment, change to lower grade, transfer or reinstatement, veterans' preference does not apply. For further clarification regarding Veteran Preference, please contact your CPAC servicing Human Resources Specialist.



USAREUR Debuts

Redesigned Lessons

Learned Website

USAREUR has launched its redesigned Lessons Learned website. The new site includes research tools and links to news services and publications.

The new site also includes a component called the Request for Research (RFR) capability. The RFRs can be submitted for subject matters when the user doesn't have time to start the research or doesn't know where to begin. The RFRs can be submitted via telephone, website submission or e-mail.

The new website is available online at <https://lessonslearned.eur.army.mil>.

General Officer Assignments



Brig. Gen. Raymond V. Mason, deputy commanding general, **Army Field Support Command**, with duty as commanding general, **Army Materiel Command Forward-Southwest Asia/C-4**, Coalition Forces Land Component Command, Kuwait to commanding general, 19th Theater Support Command, Eighth Army, Korea.

Promotion Nominations



The Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld announced that the President has nominated Col. Xavier P. Lobeto, Commander, AFSB-Europe, for promotion to the rank of brigadier general.

Welcome Aboard!



Mr. Sid Berry

Engineer (Facilities)

AFSB-Europe

Report Date: March 20, 2006

Mr. Sid Berry was previously the environmental engineer for Headquarters, Combat Equipment Group-Europe, where he had served since July of 2000. He has served in various engineering assignments throughout his 39 year career including several key positions within the U.S. Navy's Ocean Engineer Program at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in California.

After the closure of the Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Berry went to work for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, as an environmental engineer and technical manager for the Sacramento River.

Berry was elected vice mayor of the City of Vallego, Calif., (population 125,000) for 10 years. "My biggest accomplishment as mayor was bringing Marine World Africa U.S.A. to the city," Berry said. "Today, the park brings in more than \$40 million annually to the area."

Berry has served in the U.S. Air Force, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Army but can't name a favorite branch or assignment. "They've all been enjoyable and challenging in different ways," Berry said with a knowing smile.

Spoken like an Air Force man who's in the Army now.

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COMMANDER & PUBLISHING AUTHORITY

Col. Xavier P. Lobeto

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